

Message Text

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NO. 10 FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES OP-ED COLUMN BY
C.L. SULZBERGER WEDNESDAY MARCH 30 HEADED "TRIANGLES,
TRIANGLES."

2. PARIS -- IN RECENT COLUMNS I HAVE SOUGHT TO ANALYZE
POLITICAL CHANGES NOW STARTING TO TAKE PLACE IN EUROPE
AND NORTH AMERICA BUT IT IS IN ASIA, WHERE THE GREATEST
PROPORTION OF HUMANITY LIVES, THAT ALTERING POWER
BALANCES MAY PROVE MORE SIGNIFICANT.

3. DURING THE LAST FEW YEARS ASIA HAS BEEN DOMINATED
BY THE RELATIONSHIPS OF TWO MASSIVE TRIANGLES. THE
FIRST COMPRISES THE SOVIET UNION, INDIA AND THE UNITED
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STATES: THE SECOND COMPRISES CHINA, PAKISTAN AND THE
UNITED STATES.

4. THE FIRST REPRESENTED A DANGER TO THE SECOND IN
THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAS BEEN CLOSELY ALLIED TO INDIA
AND RELATIVELY HOSTILE TO CHINA AND PAKISTAN. THE
UNITED STATES POSITION IS CRITICALLY IMPORTANT BUT NOT

DECISIVELY SO IN EACH TRIANGLE.

5. IT WAS THE EXISTENCE OF A CHINA-PAKISTAN AXIS THAT FACILITATED THE MENDING OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND PEKING. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO ACTED AS GO-BETWEEN FOR HENRY KISSINGER'S FIRST CHINESE VISIT, FOLLOWED BY THAT OF PRESIDENT NIXON. THESE VISITS LARGELY ENDED A LONG SINO-AMERICAN RIFT.

6. THE CONSEQUENCE OF IMPROVED PEKING RELATIONSHIPS WAS THAT THE NIXON-KISSINGER DIPLOMACY WAS ENABLED TO APPROACH MOSCOW THROUGH THE BACK DOOR IN ITS ATTEMPT TO GET STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS MOVING. ALTHOUGH CHINA IS STILL UNDERDEVELOPED, ITS MERE SIZE IS SO ENORMOUS THAT PEKING'S BENEVOLENT NEUTRALITY TOWARD WASHINGTON HELPED THE LATTER TO TALK WITH THE RUSSIANS FROM A NEW POSITION OF STRENGTH.

7. ONE RESULT, HOWEVER, WAS THAT THE SOVIET UNION FOCUSED EVEN MORE ON INDIA IN ITS EFFORTS TO ENCIRCLE CHINA WHILE GAINING NAVAL ASCENDANCY IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. THE FAVORED POSITION ALREADY WON IN NEW DELHI BY KREMLIN DIPLOMACY PRIOR TO MRS. GANDHI'S VICTORY IN THE 1971 PAKISTAN WAR WAS CONSIDERABLY ENHANCED.

8. NOW INDIA'S NEW PRIME MINISTER, MORARJI DESAI, HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE 1971 INDIAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP TREATY "MUST NOT COME IN THE WAY OF OUR FRIENDSHIP WITH ANY OTHER STATE; WE WON'T HAVE SPECIAL RELATIONS WITH ANY UNCLASSIFIED

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OTHER COUNTRY." THIS IS A CONSIDERABLE SWITCH. INDIRA GANDHI, WHILE SHE GOVERNED, OFTEN SPOKE OF INDIA'S "SPECIAL RELATIONS" WITH MOSCOW.

9. THE TREATY SPECIFICALLY BOUND INDIA NOT TO ENTER INTO ANY RELATIONSHIP "INCOMPATIBLE" WITH THE SOVIET PACT AND IT WAS OBVIOUS MOSCOW ALONE CLAIMED THE RIGHT TO JUDGE SUCH COMPATIBILITY. THIS HAD A SPECIAL IMPACT ON INDIAN RELATIONS WITH CHINA -- WHICH HAVE BEEN POOR FOR YEARS -- AND WITH THE UNITED STATES, WHICH HAVE GRADUALLY DETERIORATED.

10. THE NEW CHINA OF HUA KUO-FENG IS INTENSELY INTERESTED IN THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS SHIFT AND EAGER TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND BREAK THE SOVIET RING BEING FORGED AROUND CHINA. ONE DOESN'T YET KNOW HOW FAR MR. DESAI'S TRULY NONALIGNED (INSTEAD OF PRO-MOSCOW) POLICY WILL GO OR HOW LONG IT WILL ENDURE.

11. MEANWHILE, WASHINGTON IS UNDOUBTEDLY PLEASED TO SEE THE DOOR EDGING OPEN ONCE AGAIN IN INDIA. BUT

WHAT WILL THIS MEAN FOR THE VITAL INDIAN OCEAN? ONE HOPE OF SECRETARY VANCE IN MOSCOW IS TO MOVE "TOWARD DEMILITARIZING THE INDIAN OCEAN." OBVIOUSLY, A CONCESSION THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE ASKED TO MAKE IS TO END DEVELOPMENT OF THE ISLET OF DIEGO GARCIA AS A NAVAL AND AIR-SUPPORT BASE.

12. UNTIL NOW INDIA HAS STRONGLY OPPOSED THAT BASE. BUT SO LONG AS MOSCOW MAINTAINS MILITARY FACILITIES IN SOMALIA AND SEEKS ASCENDANCY IN EAST AFRICAN STATES OR INDIAN OCEAN ISLANDS, IT IS HARD TO IMAGINE A DEMILITARIZED INDIAN OCEAN.

13. YET THIS IS A VITAL AREA LYING ATHWART THE PRIN-
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CIPAL MIDDLE EAST OIL ROUTES TO EUROPE AND JAPAN. MOREOVER, THE BRILLIANT ADMIRAL GORSHKOV, THE SOVIET NAVAL COMMANDER, HAS STRUNG OUT LINES OF ANCHORAGE BUOYS TO REFUEL OR REFURBISH HIS VESSELS THROUGHOUT THAT REGION.

14. SO MUCH FOR THE FIRST TRIANGLE. THE SECOND TRIANGLE IS ALSO COMPLEX. CHINA AND JAPAN HAVE CEMENTED A PRETTY FIRM ARRANGEMENT THANKS TO TOKYO'S POLITICAL ABANDONMENT OF TAIWAN. HOWEVER, WASHINGTON HAS RECENTLY BEEN IGNORING PEKING TO A SURPRISING DEGREE AND THE CHINESE ARE NOT IN GOOD SHAPE, FOLLOWING BAD EARTHQUAKES AND CROP FAILURES.

15. FINALLY, PRESIDENT CARTER'S THREATS TO WITHDRAW AMERICAN FORCES FROM SOUTH KOREA WITHIN THREE YEARS HAS THE JAPANESE WORRIED. THEY FEEL THAT THIS COULD LEAVE THEIR WEST COAST EXPOSED OR THAT NORTH KOREA, WITH OR WITHOUT SOVIET ENCOURAGEMENT, MIGHT DECIDE TO TEST THE VACUUM AFTER THE U.S. DEPARTURE.

16. THUS THE GRINDING AND STRETCHING OF THESE TWO IMMENSE POWER TRIANGLES DOMINATING ASIA -- AND DIRECTLY INVOLVING THAT PACIFIC (IF NON-ASIAN) SUPER-POWER, THE UNITED STATES -- HAVE BEGUN A NEW STRATEGIC REARRANGEMENT. IT MUST INEVITABLY RESHAPE THE PATTERN THAT PREVAILED WHEN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TOOK OVER. THE QUESTION IS: HOW AND HOW MUCH? END TEXT.
CHRISTOPHER

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